

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EB-07 /018 W
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R 191850Z AUG 76
FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES
TO USDOC WASHDC
INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 6774

UNCLAS BUENOS AIRES 5423

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: BENC, AR

SUBJECT: MAJOR PROJECT: RAILROAD REHABILITATION

REF: STATE 169934; STATE 185575; BA 4968

1. ACCORDING TO FERROCARRILES ARGENTINOS (FA) OFFICIALS INTERVIEWED, THE REHABILITATION PROGRAM IS STILL BEING DRAFTED. SIGNIFICANT PARTS OF THE PROGRAM, DISCLOSED BY THESE OFFICIALS ARE:

2. FA PURCHASED 250 G.M. ROAD LOCOMOTIVES SEVERAL YEARS AGO, 80 OF WHICH WERE IMPORTED FROM THE U.S. AND HAVE ALREADY BEEN DELIVERED. THE DELIVERY OF THE REMAINING 170, TO BE ASSEMBLED LOCALLY USING BOTH LOCAL AND IMPORTED COMPONENTS, WILL BE SPEEDED UP. FIVE OF THEM HAVE BEEN DELIVERED TO DATE, AND 15 MORE WILL BE DELIVERED THIS YEAR.

3. FA NEEDS TO PURCHASE 158 SHUNTING LOCOMOTIVES (300-500 HP), AND 39 SHUNTING LOCOMOTIVES (200 HP). THERE WILL ALSO BE A NEED FOR 9 ROAD LOCOMOTIVES (500 HP, 0.75 M TRACK). ALL OF THESE WILL HAVE TO BE OBTAINED FROM FOREIGN SUPPLIERS, AS ARGENTINE INDUSTRY CANNOT MANUFACTURE THEM. NEVERTHELESS, FA PREFERS CONTRACTS WITH FOREIGN SUPPLIERS WHICH PROVIDE FOR LOCAL MANUFACTURING OF AT LEAST PART OF THESE LOCOMOTIVES.

4. 1300 TO 2000 NEW FREIGHT-AND PASSENGER-CARS WILL BE NEEDED ANNUALLY, OVER THE 1977/1981 PERIOD. BOGIES FOR THESE MAY
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BE IMPORTED, IF ADEQUATE FINANCING CAN BE OBTAINED, THOUGH

THERE IS A LIMITED LOCAL PRODUCTION CAPABILITY IN BOGIES.

5. THE SUBURBAN RAILROAD ELECTRIFICATION PROJECT WHICH HAS BEEN PARTLY FINANCED BY THE JAPANESE, WILL REQUIRE FURTHER FINANCING. THE MARUBENI GROUP HAS ALREADY PROVIDED LOAN FOR \$140 MILLION, AND IS LIKELY TO AGREE TO FURTHER FINANCING, IN WHICH CASE THEY WILL PROVIDE THE CARS. IF THE JAPANESE ARE UNABLE OR UNWILLING TO EXTEND NEW CREDIT LINE, THERE WILL BE AN OPENING FOR U.S. SUPPLIERS.

6. WORLD BANK FINANCING WILL BE SOUGHT FOR \$40 MILLION WORTH OF RAILS AND TRACK-LAYING EQUIPMENT, TO BE PURCHASED THROUGH INTERNATIONAL CALL FOR BIDS.

7. TENTATIVE FIGURES FOR COMMUNICATIONS AND SIGNALLING EQUIPMENT PURCHASES FOR THE PERIOD 1977-1981 WERE GIVEN AT \$11,500 MILLION ARGENTINE PESOS. (US\$1.00 EQUALS 250.00 ARGENTINE PESOS). A SIGNIFICANT PART OF THIS EQUIPMENT WILL HAVE TO BE IMPORTED.

8. A PROJECT BEING STUDIED CALLS FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF A 135 KM LINE FROM ZAPALA TO LONQUIMAY, CHILE, WHICH WOULD PERMIT THE CONNECTION OF THE ARGENTINE R.R. SYSTEM WITH THE CHILEAN R.R. A 30 KM PORTION OF THAT LINE WILL BE BUILT OVER THE ANDES MOUNTAINS, AND MAY REQUIRE PARTICIPATION OF INTERNATIONAL ENGINEERING AND CONSTRUCTION FIRMS.

9. ANOTHER PROJECT CALLS FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF A TUNNEL THROUGH A MUD-EJECTING VOLCANO IN JUJUY PROVINCE. THE MUD EJECTED BY THE VOLCANO WASHES AWAY TRACKS RUNNING ALONGSIDE THE CONE. THIS PROJECT REQUIRES COMPLEX GEOLOGICAL STUDIES, AND, PROBABLY, FOREIGN ENGINEERING KNOW-HOW.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 19 AUG 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976BUENOS05423
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760319-0202
From: BUENOS AIRES
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760840/aaaabiad.tel
Line Count: 93
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 STATE 169934, 76 STATE 185575
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: CunninFX
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 08 APR 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <08 APR 2004 by ReddocGW>; APPROVED <05 JAN 2005 by CunninFX>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: MAJOR PROJECT: RAILROAD REHABILITATION
TAGS: BENC, AR
To: COM
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006